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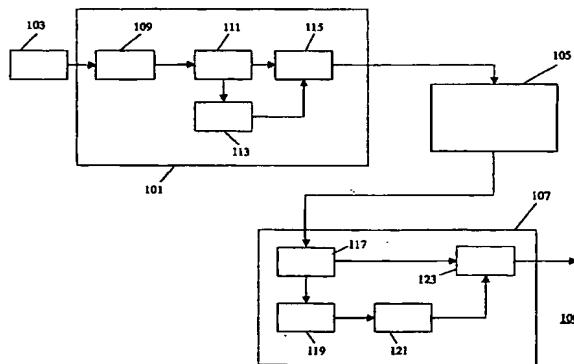
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(54) Title: METHOD AND APPARATUS FOR ENCODING OR DECODING A BITSTREAM



(57) Abstract: The invention relates to a system for re-encoding bitstreams for content signals. A re-encoder (101) receives a bitstream comprising e.g. an MPEG-2 encoded signal. The receiver (109) feeds the bitstream to an extraction processor (111) which extracts non-essential information from the bitstream thereby generating a reduced bitstream which is still MPEG-2 compliant. The non-essential information, which specifically may be higher frequency transform coefficients, is re-encoded in a re-encode processor (113) using a non-MPEG-2 encoding principle. The encoding may be optimised for the characteristics of the non-essential information resulting in a more efficient encoding. The re-encoded data is inserted in user data section of the reduced bit stream by a combine processor (115). Thus, an effective reduction in the size of the bitstream may be achieved. A decoder (107) may extract the re-encoded data from the user data section, regenerate the original non-essential information and insert this in the reduced bitstream. Specifically, the original bitstream may be regenerated. The approach may specifically be used for reversible bitstream watermarking that does not increase the size of the bitstream.

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